

## **ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A system for denying or allowing delivery of an incoming electronic mail (e-mail) message that indicates a source e-mail server, source domain, and an addressee for the message. A central e-mail server registry database stores information for all e-mail servers authorized to send e-mail messages over the Internet. Each e-mail recipient can specify characteristics of domains that are authorized to send e-mail messages to the recipient. When an incoming e-mail message arrives at the recipient's e-mail server, the server accesses the registry database to determine whether the source e-mail server and/or domain are registered, and if so, whether the registration is in good standing, and whether the source domain possesses the specified characteristics. If these conditions are not met, delivery of the e-mail is denied. Registered e-mail servers can download specified server information from the central registry and store it in a local registry. When incoming messages arrive at the server, the local registry is checked first, if unsuccessful, the central registry is checked.